



## **Chapter 1- Introduction**

Welcome to the first edition of the Development Handbook. This handbook is a compilation of information on all real estate development processes in the City of Wichita. The information, which is organized by department, also includes process flowcharts and helpful tips from staff intended to make your approval processes as simple as possible. This guide is also available on-line at the City of Wichita website: [www.wichita.gov](http://www.wichita.gov) for easy reference and the most up-to-date information.

The development departments outlined in this handbook include the Office of Central Inspection, Metropolitan Area Planning Department (a joint City-County agency), Water and Sewer Department, and Public Works/Engineering Department.

The work of the development departments directly supports and addresses the five City Council's goals:

- Provide a safe and secure community
- Promote economic vitality and affordable living
- Ensure efficient infrastructure
- Enhance quality of life
- Support a dynamic core area and vibrant neighborhoods

The development department staff members are committed to facilitating and maintaining open and honest communication with the development community. It is the City's belief that we, in concert with the development community, are partners in the successful development of the City. In order to maximize Wichita's development potential, there must be frequent, consistent and professional communication.

### **Staff's Role**

Staff's role in the development process is to administer and coordinate the City's development standards. This includes policies, procedures, ordinances, codes and professional standards. Staff's role is also to interpret or explain code issues, offer suggestions and provide advice for private sector development professionals. This includes developers, builders, contractors, architects and engineers. Staff is also responsible to provide a forum for input from other interested parties and stakeholders including adjacent landowners and other city and county governments.

### **Development Community's Role**

The developer is responsible to know and understand the development process and requirements and manage his/her design and construction professionals. The most important role a property owner or developer has is to ensure complete, quality plans and documents are submitted for review/approval in a timely manner at the beginning of the

application process. Staff's review and approval times are dependent upon the size and complexity of the project, so it is important for the developer to plan accordingly.

## **First Steps**

A recommended first step in the development review process is to schedule a preliminary development conference. All staff members who have a role with the approval of the project will be convened between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., at the developer's convenience, to discuss the various facets of the project.

Conferences for routine projects are scheduled by calling the Office of Central Inspection at 316-268-4460. Conferences for complex multi-faceted projects are coordinated and scheduled through the Development Assistance Center at 316-268-4371. These preliminary review opportunities are available either prior to submittal of plans requiring approval by the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission or before submittal of construction plans and documents to Central Inspection for building permit issuance. City staff encourages preliminary conferences as a means to expedite the development process.

Throughout the development process, staff is available to answer all project questions. Feel free to call or e-mail the appropriate staff member. *The Real Estate Developers Directory On-line* which lists phone, fax and e-mail information for all City of Wichita and Sedgwick County staff members engaged in development review is available at [www.wichita.gov](http://www.wichita.gov).

## **Need Help?**

If there are challenges with a project or difficulty in reaching a staff member, feel free to contact Terry Cassady, Development Assistance Director. The Director serves as a liaison between the development community and city staff. You may reach her at:

Terry Cassady  
316-268-4371 (phone)  
316-268-4519 (fax)  
[tcassady@wichita.gov](mailto:tcassady@wichita.gov) (email)

The City of Wichita welcomes your comments on the effectiveness of this handbook as well as any business process improvements you have. Contact the Development Assistance Director with this information.

This handbook is a guidebook outlining the general development processes and is not a substitute for the actual codes, regulations and statutes that govern real estate development and construction. Contact staff to verify the information you are using is correct.

This handbook will be updated as needed and the current version available electronically on the City's website, [www.wichita.gov](http://www.wichita.gov). Refer to the website for the current information so that updates can be printed and maintained in your personal manual.